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TAGS: KMDR KPAO OIIP OPRC PGOV PREL PK

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: December 11, 2009

Summary: Coverage of the arrest of five Americans in Sargodha dominated front page news for the second consecutive day, citing President Obama and Secretary Clinton's statements on the investigation. The reports coincided with extensive coverage of President Obama's acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize. The President's remarks on war and peace were carried alongside reports of anger in Peshawar over his selection. Papers covered a wide variety of statements on U.S. security operations, including comments by the Foreign Office spokesman and General McChrystal ruling out "hot pursuit" inside Pakistan and Interior Minister Rehman Malik's statement that "Blackwater is not operating in Pakistan." U.S. Congressional actions also figured prominently, with reports on the 1.5 billion dollar appropriation under Kerry-Lugar and calls for more controls on aid to Pakistan. Congressman Dennis Kucinich's call "for withdrawal from Afghanistan and Pakistan" also received coverage with the latest polls on U.S. support for the President's Afghanistan plan. More law enforcement issues rounded out coverage, including reports on former president of the Bank of Punjab, Hamesh Khan's arrest in the U.S. and continued coverage of the Headley case. Some newspapers covered the release of American Nicole Tung, who had been held on charges of "spying for the U.S." Several Urdu papers reported that police stopped a U.S. Embassy vehicle "fleeing a checkpoint in Islamabad," and let the passengers go after they "apologized to the officers." Commenting on the ongoing military offensive against militancy, a prominent columnist, Ayaz Amir, opined in "The News," that "we have to fight this war on our own, within our borders, without being seen as an American appendage." End Summary.

TOP STORIES:

News Story: U.S. Probe Into Arrest Of Americans In Pakistan "Dawn" (12/11)

"U.S. President Barack Obama said on Thursday he envisioned 'a series of investigations' into the arrest of five American Muslims in Pakistan for allegedly attempting to contact two militant groups." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: War At Some Level An Expression Of Human Feelings, Says Obama - "Dawn" (12/11)

"U.S. President Barack Obama accepted on Thursday the Nobel Peace Prize, uncomfortably acknowledging his role as a leader at war while insisting that conflict can be morally justified." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: Anger In Peshawar Over Prize "The Nation" (12/11)

"The Nobel prize is for those who have made achievements, but Obama is a killer," Jabir Aftab, an engineer living in the shadow of bomb attacks in Peshawar, said Thursday. As President Barack Obama conceded others "may be more deserving" of the prize he won for international diplomacy, there was anger and bewilderment in northwest Pakistan where many blame the United States for a surge in violence."

News Story: U.S. General Rules Out 'Hot Pursuit' Into Pakistan
"Dawn" (12/11)

"Commander of the U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, Gen Stanley McChrystal, told a congressional panel on Thursday that his troops would not enter Pakistan to fight militants."

News Story: U.S. 'Hot Pursuit' Out Of Question "The Nation"
(12/11)

"Pakistan would never compromise on its nuclear capability and nuclear deterrence and its security forces are fully capable of combating terrorism, Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit said this during a weekly media briefing on Thursday. He added that Pakistani security forces did not need assistance from any country, neither there was any option of hot pursuit."

News Story: All Terrorists In Pakistan Are Locals, Says Malik
"Daily Times" (12/11)

"The U.S. security contractor, Blackwater, is not operating in Pakistan and all the terrorists in the country are locals, a private TV channel quoted Interior Minister Rehman Malik as saying on Thursday"

News Story: U.S. Congress Approves \$1.5 Bn For Pakistan "The News"
(12/11)

"The U.S. Congress has appropriated the amount of \$1.5 billion for Pakistan for fiscal year 2010 under the Kerry-Lugar Law. Of this amount \$268 million will be used as military assistance."

Editorial: Sound Judgment Of Chief Justice About Our Rulers' Character, an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (12/11)

"It has now become almost crystal clear that the U.S. wants to expand the Afghan war to our tribal areas. Our successive governments have bartered away our national dignity and independence for the U.S. financial assistance. At this critical juncture of Pakistan's history, the role played by the people, occupying the top echelons of power in the country, is pushing the nation into further despondency. We think it is high time for us to formulate an independent national policy to arrest the growing threats to the very existence of Pakistan."

News Story: U.S. Lawmaker Calls For Withdrawl From Afghanistan, Pakistan - The News" (12/11)

"A U.S. lawmaker sharply opposed to the war in Afghanistan plans to offer twin resolution come January aiming to force President Barack Obama to bring home any U.S. forces there and in Pakistan. Democratic Representative Dennis Kucinich's proposals unveiled Wednesday could lead to a first vote to gauge support among Obama's congressional allies for his decision to send 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan."

Opinion: The Sharp Head Of The Tempest Brewing, an op-ed by Ayaz Amir in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (12/11)

". . . We cannot afford to be tied to America's apron strings the way we are at present. We have to fight this war on our own, within our borders, without being seen as an American appendage. It is time to loosen, not tighten, the American connection. . ."

News Story: Hamesh Khan Arrested In United States "Daily Times"
(12/11)

"Hamesh Khan, the former president of the Bank of Punjab (BoP), has

been arrested in America by the U.S. Department of Justice, a private TV channel reported on Thursday. According to the channel, the U.S. Department of Justice has informed Islamabad about Hamesh Khan's arrest, after the Pakistani government had contacted Interpol, requesting that they arrest the former BoP president."

News Story: Alleged U.S. Spy Released "The Nation" (12/11)

"An American national, held on charges of spying for the U.S., was released on Wednesday by the local authorities. Local security staff posted on Pak-Afghan border in the turbulent Khyber Agency had rounded up the alleged female spy Nicole Tung who claimed to be working for the U.S. government but failed to show any proof including passport or valid visa document."

News Story: Makes U.S. Nationals Respect The Law Of The Land "The Nation" (12/11)

"Police officers' commitment to law enforcement was revealed when one of them, a young ASP, chased a fleeing U.S. embassy vehicle after it deliberately ignored the police's request at a picket to stop and broke through the picket instead. The ASP gave them chase and brought the Americans back from two kilometers away from the picket and forced them to tender an apology to the police officials deployed there, sources said on Thursday."

News Story: U.S. Considers Using Drones For Supplies "Daily Times" (12/11)

"The U.S. military is taking a serious look at resupplying combat troops in Afghanistan using unmanned aircraft, an Air Force general said on Wednesday. Faced with the task of delivering vast amounts of supplies by land and by air to troops in the mountainous, land-locked country, senior officers were considering using pilotless aircraft to help with the job, said U.S. Transportation Command chief General Duncan McNabb."

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: Imran Says He Got Positive Response From Taliban "The News" (12/11)

"Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan, who on Wednesday offered his services and even showed the willingness to go to the tribal areas to get the mounting terrorism issue resolved through political dialogue, got encouraging response from the Taliban side."

News Story: 10 Militants Killed In Bara Search Operation - "Dawn" (12/11)

"At least 10 suspected militants were killed and several others injured during a search operation carried out by security forces in Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency on Thursday."

News Story: Who Is David Coleman Headley? - "Daily Times" (12/11)

"David Coleman Headley was known as Daood Gilani until 2006. He is the son of a noted former director general of Radio Pakistan, General (r) Salim Gilani and half brother of Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani's public relations officer (PRO), Daniyal Gilani. . ."

Opinion: The Long Duel, an op-ed by Mowahid Hussain Shah in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/11)

". . . Given Obama's speech and the escalating conflict on the Afghanistan-Pakistan frontier, what lies next? Situational awareness suggests that America is in for the long haul. . . Obama's ambitious agenda on healthcare, jobs, and economic recovery has to compete with the rising costs of its Afghan undertaking. If mishandled, it can consume his presidency, just as Vietnam consumed Lyndon Johnson, and 9/11 consumed the Republican administration of George Bush. Obama now owns the Afghan war. . ."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: Policy Of Nuclear Deterrence To Remain Intact: FO - "The

News" (12/11)

"Pakistan on Thursday ruled out any chances of a compromise on its policy of nuclear deterrence and cautioned major powers in the region to refrain from creating instability by helping India to further its nuclear ambitions."

Editorial: India Fuelling Terror, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/11)

"As evidence of Indian involvement in sponsoring terrorism in Pakistan, whether it is FATA, Balochistan or another part of the country, has continued to multiply, the Interior Minister's accusatory finger can no longer be termed as Islamabad's mere knee-jerk reaction against its arch enemy.....Reports also indicate that the Interior Ministry has kept the Foreign Ministry posted with these developments. Again, COAS General Kayani apparently took up the matter with US Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mullen, as he, in turn, has confirmed that he conveyed Pakistan's concerns to the past as well as the present Indian Army Chiefs."

Editorial: Solid Proofs Of Indian Interference In Pakistan, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (12/11)

"Interior Minister is providing hard evidence of Indian interference and the Foreign Minister does not consider it enough. This situation can best be described as unfortunate, lack of coordination between the two ministries and incompetence of the authorities concerned.... India blamed Pakistan for Mumbai attacks without any evidence. However, we have proofs of Indian terrorism [in Pakistan]. There is now no justification for Indian High Commissioner to be in Pakistan.... Pakistan should take a strict note of the situation and should think of the eastern border instead of the western one, where India has deployed its warplanes squadrons."

Editorial: Lack Of Harmony On The Issue Of Indian Interference In

Pakistan, an editorial in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir.25,000) (12/11)

"It is a matter of concern for the nation that the government statements on Indian interference in Pakistan lack harmony. The Interior Minister says that it has provided solid evidence of Indian interference to the Foreign Ministry yet the Foreign Minister says that the evidence that has been provided is insufficient. The question is: if there is lack of harmony on such a vital issue, what would be the state of affairs in other areas?"

Opinion: How U.S. Winked At Indian Nukes, an op-ed by Basharat Hussain Qizilbash in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/11)

"For quite some time now, the U.S. media has been propagating scary stories about Pakistan's nuclear weapons while maintaining a deathly silence about the Indian nukes. . . In other words, the Americans gave a clear pass to the Indians. . . However, an article in the Washington Post, while realising the fallout of this detonation in the region critically observed: "India's Peaceful Nuclear Explosion Experiment is first of all the test of a bomb....There (is) no real distinction between a military and peaceful explosion....For India to call its explosion 'peaceful' and to abjure all military intent is in a word rubbish...the blast can only further aggravate Pakistan's fears of Indian domination."

Editorial: Need To Expose Indian Conspiracies Before International Community, an editorial in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (12/11)

"India is the main beneficiary of the war on terror while Pakistan, despite rendering innumerable sacrifices, has been continuously on the receiving end. Washington has played the central role in elevating New Delhi to the position of a regional bully with a view to use India in containing China. The criminal silence of our own rulers, over the Indian interference in Pakistan, is almost unfathomable for the nation. We think that the government must take

immediate and hectic steps to expose India's nefarious designs against Pakistan, and at the same time, develop a national strategy to counter this growing threat to our country."

News Story: Giving Up Nuclear Command Not Sign Of Weakness: Zardari "The News" (12/11)

"President Asif Zardari has said his decision to hand back the chairmanship of the National Command Authority (NCA) that controls over country's nuclear assets should not be seen as a sign of weakness; rather, it demonstrates the vitality of the Pakistani democracy."

News Story: Zardari Seeks US Mediation On Kashmir Issue "Dawn" (12/11)

"President Asif Ali Zardari called upon U.S. President Barack Obama on Thursday to demonstrate American neutrality and willingness to help India and Pakistan overcome their mutual distrust by stepping up its efforts 'to mediate the Kashmir dispute'."

MISCELLANEOUS

News Story: Foreign Airlines Told To Restart Peshawar Operations By 31st - "Daily Times" (12/11)

"The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has set December 31 as a deadline for foreign airlines - mainly from the Gulf - to restart operations from Peshawar or discontinue services if they feel the security situation is a threat."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)

Patterson